

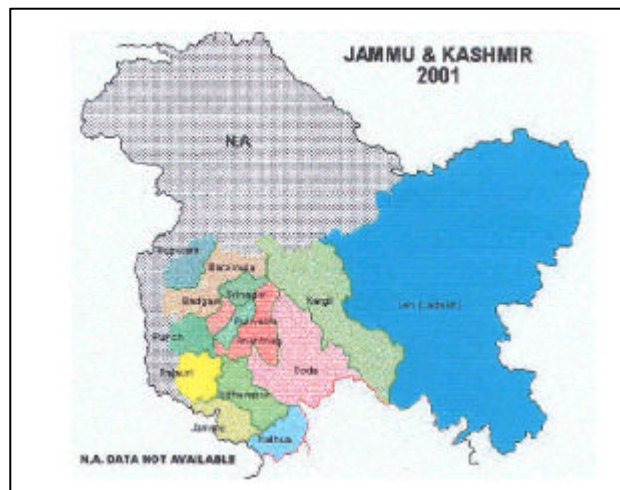
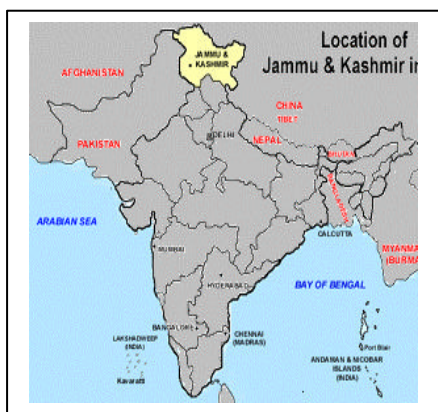
CHAPTER I

Jammu and Kashmir : An Introductory Profile

INTRODUCTION

Perched securely among the lofty snow-sprinkled mighty Himalayan mountain chain, the emerald blue skies peeping through the chinks of the clouds, the tall chinar trees swaying to the rhythm of the gusts of wind, all condense into a kindly smile, forming the lovely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

It is located in the northern part of the Indian sub continent in the vicinity of the Karakoram and western mountain ranges. It falls in the great northwestern complex of the Himalayan Ranges with marked relief variation, snow-capped summits, antecedent drainage, complex geological structure and rich temperate flora and fauna. The forests of the state are a natural tonic wrapped up in a wonderland – a paradise for the stressed city folk from all over the country. Within its hectares of heavily forested mountains, lowlands and wetlands there are numerous varieties of plants and trees, innumerable species of animals and a myriad of birds and insects. Walking through the forest floor, one can discover a treasure trove of curious insects and flowers. More than just ethereal beauty, the state has majesty, grandeur and an eeriness. The water bodies provide an unparalleled window in the wonders of the magnificent forest regions.



Source: Census of India 2001

HISTORY

There are various versions of historical backgrounds available for the State of Jammu & Kashmir in general and for the valley of Kashmir in particular. Since the intention here is not to write history but to provide a historical background for the introductory profile, a mixture of various versions was thought to be a desirable option.

According to one version¹, 'ancient Kashmir is steeped in legend. It is said that the Kashmir Valley was once the great lake Satisar (the Lake of the goddess Sati, also known as Durga), home to ferocious demons. Responding to the penance of the great sage Kashyapa, the grandson of Brahma himself, the gods destroyed the demon of the lake, with a pebble divinely caste, which today stands as the hill upon which towers the fortress built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, and known today as Hari Parbat. The water of Satisar was drained through a breach in the mountains at what is now the mouth of the Valley, beyond the northern town of Baramulla (or the Sanskrit name of Varaha Mukh, the visage of the boar). From then on the Valley has carried the name of its founder. Like that of the rest of India, the ancient history of the State lacks detailed documentation although history and legend have been indistinguishably mixed in 'Rajatarangini' by Kalhan. His identity remains a source of conjecture. According to him Kashyapa was the pioneer King of Kashmir and this region was known as *Kashyapamar*, which gradually changed to *Kashmar* and *Kashmir*. In the 3rd Century BC, the state was incorporated into the Maurya Empire under Asoka, founder of the city of Srinagar. Buddhism became the principal religion which continued into the times of the Kushanas (1st and 2nd centuries AD), the names of many of whose rulers several towns in the Valley were named and continue to be borne, such as Kanispora after Kanishka, and Hushkora after Huvishka. It was in Kanishka's time that the 3rd Great Buddhist Council was held in Srinagar, formalizing the split between the schools of Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism. Thereafter Buddhism declined in the Valley though it retained its vibrancy and continues to thrive in Ladakh.'

'In the 8th century, Kashmir rose to become the centre of a great kingdom, spanning much of North India and parts of Central Asia under Lalitaditya Muktapida, who was the builder of the Martand (sun) Temple, and founder of the Valley's irrigation canal system which has survived for centuries, helping water rich harvests of the finest rice, a variety of temperate fruit and exotic crops such as saffron.'

¹ http://www.indianembassy.org/policy/Kashmir/Kashmir_MEA/history.html

According to another version,² 'Kashmir passed into the hands of Muslims rulers in 1324 A.D. The most notable Muslim rulers of Kashmir were Zain-ul-Abedin and Yusuf Shah Chak. The Mughal emperor Akbar conquered Kashmir in 1587, but, Aurangzeb's successor was a weak ruler and in 1752 the Afghan ruler Ahmed Shah Abdali seized Kashmir. His reign is remembered as one of the most terrible in Kashmir's entire history. In 1819, the Sikh ruler of Punjab Maharaja Ranjit Singh evicted the Pathans from Kashmir with the help of the Dogra Army of Jammu. The Sikhs ruled Kashmir till their defeat by the British. Thereafter, Maharaja Gulab Singh of Jammu paid Rs. 75 lakhs to the East India Company in 1846 in exchange for Kashmir and some other areas under a treaty later named as 'Treaty of Amritsar'.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

The total area of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is about 2,22,236 sq. km., of which 78,114 sq. km. are under the illegal occupation of Pakistan and 37,555 sq. km. under China. In addition to this, 5,180 sq. km. of J&K were illegally ceded to China by Pakistan under the March 1963 Sino-Pak Boundary agreement. The state shares a 221- km. international boundary with Pakistan in the Jammu region and 365 km. with China in its Ladakh sector. The line of control (LoC), which divides the Indian and Pak- occupied parts of the state, is 1001-km. long (Jammu - 205 km. Valley - 460 km. and Ladakh/Siachen area -336 km.). The border with China is 465 km. long. Pakistan has annexed the districts of Dikaner, Baltistan, Gilgit, Muzaffarabad, Kotli, Mirpur, Poonch and Bagh, which collectively had a population of about 2.5 million (1981 Census). Almost all the people in the Pak-occupied part are Muslims. The Chinese-held territory is called Aksai Chin (meaning *un-inhabited*). According to the 2001 census conducted after 20 years, the size of the Jammu & Kashmir population is 10,069,917, which is 0.98 per cent of the country's total population.

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISIONS

Kashmir comprises three natural divisions, namely, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. For administrative purposes, the state is divided into two main divisions, i.e., Kashmir and Jammu Provinces. A Divisional Commissioner heads the administration of each division. The two districts of Ladakh region, namely, Leh and Kargil are part of the Kashmir Division for purposes of administration. Prior to 1971, these two provinces consisted of 10 districts only. Between 1971 and 1981, four new

² <http://www.jammu-kashmir.com/basicfacts/tour/regions.html>

districts were created taking the total number of districts in the state to 14. At present, the Kashmir Province comprises the districts of Srinagar, Budgam, Pulwama, Anantnag, Kupwara, Baramulla, Leh and Kargil and the Jammu Province comprises the districts of Jammu, Kathua, Poonch, Rajouri, Udhampur and Doda. A Deputy Commissioner who is also District Development Commissioner, heads each district. In the Ladakh region in 1995, the 'Autonomous Hill Development Council' was established as part of decentralized administration. Annex 1 provides an overview of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of population, literacy rate, number of villages, tehsils, blocks and panchayats and villages electrified and provided with drinking water facilities. There is striking variation as far as the distribution of population among various districts is concerned. The literacy rate also varies from 40.80 per cent in Kupwara to 77.30 per cent in Jammu district. Administratively, the districts are divided into blocks for development purposes and into tehsils for revenue purposes. The state consists of 59 tehsils and 119 blocks spread over 14 districts.

THREE MAIN REGIONS

Jammu and Kashmir is a multi-lingual, multi-religious and multi-racial state and each group has its own distinct and peculiar cultural ethos, further deepened by geographical divisions created by formidable mountain ranges.³ Thus, the state comprises three main regions, namely, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. A brief description of these three regions provides the necessary understanding about each of them.

Jammu Region

This region comprises the plains, hills and mountains south and west of the mighty Pir Panjal range that separates Kashmir Valley from the plains of the subcontinent. Today, the Jammu region comprises the districts of Kathua, Jammu, Udhampur, Doda, Rajouri and Poonch.

Kathua town is situated on the Jammu - Pathankot National Highway at a distance of about 87 km. east of Jammu and about 25 km. west of Pathankot. The district shares its boundary with Punjab in the south, Himachal Pradesh in the east and Udhampur in the north. The geographical area of the district is 2,651 sq. km. with four tehsils namely, Basholi, Bilawar, Kathua and Hiranagar. The literacy rate is 65.29 per cent. The majority of the population of Kathua district is dependent on agriculture. About 80 per cent of agricultural land in the district is non-irrigated.

³ www.jammu-kashmir.com/basicfacts

A large section of the population depends on wage labour and government employment.

Jammu district is extended along the whole length of the international border with Pakistan. It shares its border with Rajouri, Udhampur and Kathua district in the north in the east and in the southeast respectively. The geographical area of the district is 3097 sq. km. with 5 tehsils, namely, Jammu, Samba, Akhnoor, R.S. Pura and Bishnah. The literacy rate stands at 77.3 per cent, which is not only highest among all the districts in the state but higher than the national average. The rural population depends mainly on agriculture. Except for the Kandi area, the land is irrigated and fertile.

Udhampur is the third largest district of Jammu and Kashmir and is situated at an altitude of 2,134 feet above sea level. It is located at a distance of 66 km. from Jammu on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway. Rajouri bounds the district in the west, Jammu in the southwest, Doda in the east and Kathua in the southeast. It also shares its boundary with Anantnag in the north. The geographical area of the district is 4,550 sq. km. with 5 tehsils, namely, Udhampur, Chenani, Ramnagar, Reasi and Mahore. Literacy rate is 54.16 per cent. The principal occupation of the people is agriculture. There are few industries in the district.

Doda is the largest district in the Jammu region. Doda town, after which the district is named, is situated at an altitude of 5,000 feet above sea level. The Khilani village of the district is situated on the National Highway at about 45 km. from Batot linking the Kashmir valley with Jammu and other parts of the country. The district shares borders with Anantnag district of Kashmir Valley and the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh. The entire area is hilly. The area of the district is 11,691 sq. km. The district comprises six tehsils, namely, Doda, Kishtwar, Bhaderwah, Gandoh, Ramban and Banihal. The literacy rate is 46.92 per cent. The people in general are poor due to inadequate production of food grains in the district. The majority of the population depends on ration supply through government shops (PDS). The widespread unemployment has further increased after the government banned leasing of forest to the contractors.

Rajouri district was carved out of Poonch district in 1968. It shares a long border from Sunderbani to Bhimbergali with Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK) in the west. It is bounded by Udhampur district in the east and by Jammu in the southeast. The northern part of the district consists of hilly terrain. The geographical area of the district is 2,630 sq. km. It comprises of six tehsils, namely, Thanamandi, Rajouri, Budhal, Kalakote Sunderbani and Nowshera. The literacy rate is 57.65 per

cent. About 80 per cent of the population of the district depends on agriculture. There is no industry in the district. Rearing livestock is the main source of income. The economic condition of the people is generally unsatisfactory.

Poonch town, the headquarters of the district by the same name, is situated at a distance of 246 km. northwest of Jammu. The town is at a height of 3,287 feet above sea level. It is surrounded by the Line of Control (LoC) on three sides and is separated from Kashmir Valley by the mighty Pir Panjal range in the north. The geographical area of the district is 1,674 sq. km., comprising three tehsils, viz., Mendhar, Surankote, and Haveli (Poonch). The literacy rate is 51.07 per cent. The people of Poonch district are mainly dependent on agriculture and government jobs. There are no industrial units in the district. The terrain is hilly with little fertile land and therefore there is great dependency on government jobs.

Kashmir Region

The Kashmir region or valley, is a significant part of the state. The valley is an ancient lake basin 140 km. long and 32 km. wide. The average elevation of the valley is 5,300 feet above sea level. The tall mountains that surround the valley rising up to 16,000 feet ensure that the weather here is pleasant for most of the year. Its rich alluvial soil well drained by rivers and streams, yields rice, saffron, vegetables and a variety of fruit. It comprises six districts, namely, Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam, Kupwara, Pulwama and Srinagar.

Anantnag is the southern most district of the valley. It shares its border with district Pulwama in the west and from south to east it is attached to Rajouri, Udhampur and Doda districts respectively. It borders Kargil in the north. The district is criss-crossed by a network of perennial rivers, streams and waterfalls. The geographical area of the district is 3,984 sq. km. with five tehsils, namely, Pahalgam, Anantnag, Doru, Kulgam and Bijbehara. The literacy rate is 44.10 per cent. Agriculture and livestock rearing are the main sources of livelihood. The district is also well known for traditional handicraft like Gabbas and wooden craft. The district, enriched with perennial streams with clean water has developed commercial fishing activities with a scattering of trout farms. Sericulture industry has earned a good name among all the small household industries in the district.

Baramulla district completely surrounds the district Kupwara and shares the border with PoK at two places in the west as well as in the northeast. The average height of the district is 5187 feet above sea level. It also shares its border with Srinagar,

Budgam and Poonch districts in the south and with Kargil in the east. The district has a flat topography, salubrious climate and scenic beauty. The geographical area of the district is 4,588 sq. km. with six tehsils, namely, Bandipur, Sonawari, Sopore, Baramulla, Gulmarg and Uri. The literacy rate is 44.57 per cent. Bulk of the district's population depends on agriculture for their livelihood. Sopore tehsil is very famous for its apples. Rearing of livestock is one of the important occupations in the district. It has been the first district to generate and provide electricity to large parts of the state from Mohara Power House.

Budgam district was carved out from Srinagar on 1 July, 1979. It is centrally located in the Kashmir valley. It is bounded by Srinagar in the northeast, south and west by Poonch and in the north and northwest by Baramulla. Although the district has several high mountains, its average height is just 5,281 feet above sea level. The geographical area of the district is 1,371 sq. km. with three tehsils, namely, Chadura, Budgam and Beerwah. The literacy rate is 40.94 per cent.

Kupwara district is situated at an altitude of 5,300 feet above sea level and is the northern-most district of the Kashmir valley. It shares a long border with PoK in its north and western side and is totally enclosed by the Baramulla district on the other side. This district is endowed with rich dense forests. The river 'Kishan Ganga' originating from the Himalayas flows through the outer areas of the district from east to west. Some well-known passes located in the district are Gabhra Pass, Sadham Pass and Nastuchan Pass. The geographical area of the district is 2,379 sq. km. with three tehsils, namely, Handwara, Karnah and Kupwara. The literacy rate is 40.80 per cent, the lowest in the state. Although the district is considered deficient in natural irrigation, about 90 per cent of the population depends in one way or other on agriculture for their livelihood. Walnuts are the major horticultural produce in the district. Rearing of livestock is also an important occupation of the people.

Pulwama district came into existence in July 1979. It is situated in the southeastern part of the valley. It shares its borders with Srinagar and Budgam in the northwest and is bounded by the Anantnag district in the south and east. The geographical area of the district is 1,398 sq. km. with three tehsils, namely, Shopian, Pulwama and Tral. The literacy rate is 47.76 per cent. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood in the district. About 0.73 lakhs hectares of land is available for cultivation. Mushroom cultivation and horticulture are of great importance to the economy. Livestock rearing is also an important occupation.

Srinagar district is located to the southeast of Baramulla. It shares its border with

Baramulla, Budgam, Pulwama, Anantnag and Kargil districts from the west to east. The valley is surrounded by the Hurmukh mountain (16,903 feet) in the east, Tosh Maidan (4,000 feet) in the north and Snony Kazi Nag (12,125 feet) in the northwest and also the Mahadev Mountain. The valley is a land of lakes, clear streams, green meadows and magnificent trees. The river Jhelum dissects the district diagonally from the southeast to the northwest. Srinagar is the state's summer capital. The geographical area of the district is 2,228 sq. km. with two tehsils, namely, Srinagar and Ganderbal. The literacy rate is 59.18 per cent. The district is predominantly urban in character. According to the 2001 Census, 79.54 per cent of the total population was urban. It has developed all the characteristics of a tourist paradise, with tremendous growth in the development of handicraft and cottage industries, hotels, houseboats, guest houses and tourist transport. The handicrafts of the district have become famous worldwide. Livestock rearing is another important occupation in the district, engaging about 5.25 per cent of the work force. Animal husbandry and sheep breeding have received special attention. Rice and maize are the main crops of the district.

Ladakh Region

Ladakh constitutes the eastern-most part of the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It comprises two districts, namely, Leh and Kargil. This is one of the most breathtakingly beautiful parts of the state and its surreal landscape has often been termed as 'moonscape'. Ladakh covers about 117,000 sq. km. and includes the Karakoram Range and the upper Indus River valley. Ladakh is one of the highest places on earth with the average altitude being above 12,000 feet. Situated on the leeward side of the mountain, it hardly gets any rain. People live a very traditional life, herding sheep and yak, and growing barley near the riverbeds in summer.

Leh district is the northern as well as the eastern most part of Jammu and Kashmir. It is linked with the Kashmir valley by the Zojila pass (10,098 feet) and forms part of the outer Himalayas. It is one of the highest regions of the earth (altitude 8,800 feet to 18,000 feet approximately) with mountains running along parallel ranges. The climate is very cold and in winter, temperatures dip to minus 40 degrees centigrade. The district is bounded by the international border or LoC with China in the north and east, and with PoK in the north. The geographical area of the district is 45,110 sq. km. with Leh as the district headquarters. The district has two assembly constituencies, namely Nubra and Leh and five blocks namely, Leh, Khaisi, Nubra, Nyoma and Durbuk. The literacy rate is 62.24 percent. Agriculture and animal husbandry are the main

sources of livelihood. Cultivation is possible only during summer; barley, vegetables and fruits like apple and apricot are the main crops. Forestry is also one source of income and Leh abounds in medicinal herbs. This district is the source of origin of pashmina goat which produces fibre used for high quality fabric pashmina wool. The district is also rich in water resources like ponds, streams and rivers, which can be utilised for fisheries.

Kargil town is located at a distance of 204 km from Srinagar almost midway on the Srinagar - Leh National Highway. Most of the villages of the district are located at an average height of 10,000 feet above sea level. It shares the Line of Control (LoC) with PoK in the north and borders with Leh in the east and the Kashmir valley in the west. The geographical area of the district is 14,036 sq. km. The district has two tehsils as well as two assembly constituencies, namely, Kargil and Zaskar. The climate is very cold and in winter, the highway is blocked for more than six months, from December to June every year. The snowfall around the Zojila pass and Drass region is very heavy. The literacy rate is 58.21 per cent. Agriculture is the main occupation and about 91 per cent of the population is engaged in it. Wheat and millet are the major crops. The Baltal-Kargil road, linking Kargil with Srinagar, is the lifeline of the district. Construction of the 230-kms Kargil-Padam and Bodh Khushboochaktan roads is in progress. Tourism is being promoted as an industry after Ladakh was opened to foreign tourists in 1974. Horticulture and forestry are being given special attention.

CLIMATE

Climate exerts a profound influence on the inhabitants of any region. Their social, cultural, economic and other aspects of life are directly or indirectly governed by climate. The climate of the state ranges from the burning and the scorching heat of the plains of (Jammu Division) to the snow-capped heights of Gulmarg (Kashmir) and the mud peak of Mount Godwin Austin (Ladakh) 21,265 feet above sea level, the second highest in the world. All these represent the three different climatic zones.

From alpine (Ladakh region) to the sub tropical (Jammu region) the extreme variants of climate in Jammu and Kashmir are due to its location and topography. The sheltered valley of Kashmir, however, exhibits an exception to its peripheral region. Broadly, the state of Jammu and Kashmir comprises three distinct climatic regions: cold arid desert areas of Ladakh, temperate Kashmir Valley, and the humid sub-tropical region of Jammu. In this context, Lawrence's quotation boldly stands out:

“Every hundred feet of elevation brings some new phase of climate and the vegetation, and in a short ride of thirty miles one can pass from overpowering heat to climate delightfully cool”.⁴

The temperature in the region varies spatially. Leh is the coldest (-28°C average) while Jammu is the hottest. Mean monthly temperature is lowest in January and highest in July except in Jammu where highest temperature is experienced in June. Mean monthly temperature in January varies from -17°C at Drass to 14°C at Jammu; Kargil and Leh being other stations of below freezing average. Considering the overall distribution of climatic elements, four units become obvious:

- ❑ The windward (Jammu region)
- ❑ The leeward (Ladakh region)
- ❑ The high altitude Kashmir (Himadri, Pir Panjal),
- ❑ The Kashmir valley.

The climate of the valley of Kashmir has its own peculiarities. The seasons are marked with sudden change and the climate can be divided into six seasons of two months each.⁵

Table I.1
Seasons of Kashmir Valley

<i>Season</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Local Terms</i>
Spring	16 March to 15 May	Sont
Summer	16 May to 15 July	Retkol (Grishm)
Rainy Season	16 July to 15 September	Waharat
Autumn	16 September to 15 November	Harud
Winter	16 November to 15 January	Wandah
Ice Cold	16 January 15 March	Shishur

⁴ Lawrence, W.R. “ Valley of Kashmir” p.12

⁵ Raina. A.N.: “Geography of Jammu and Kashmir”, p.50 and Singh. R.L. ed. “India: A Regional Geography” p. 361

The aforementioned climatologic divide does not apply only to Kashmir Valley but to parts of Jammu, which like Kashmir Valley, are subjected to snowfall and a severe winter. Many parts of the Ladakh region are also subjected to heavy snowfall and others to severe dry cold. There is such heavy snowfall on the way to Ladakh from the valley that it remains cut off by road for about 5 - 6 months every year.

PHYSIOGRAPHY

The territory of the state is divided into seven physiographic zones closely associated with the structural components of the western Himalayas. These include: *The Plains*: The plains of the Jammu region are characterized by interlocking sandy alluvial fans that have been deposited during the Pleistocene age by the streams flowing from the foothills and by a much-dissected pediment (eroded bedrock surface) covered by loams and loess (fine deposits of silt).

The Foothills: Rising from 2002 to 7002 feet, the foothills form the outer and inner zones.

The Lesser Himalayas: Composed of Permo-Carboniferous volcanic rocks of granite, gneisses, quartz and slates, the Pir Panjal constitutes the first mountain rampart comprising the western-most part of the Lesser Himalayas.

The Greater Himalayas: This contains ranges reaching more than 20,013 feet (6100 metres) in altitude. These ranges act as a climatic divide and stop the cold wind coming from Central Asia.

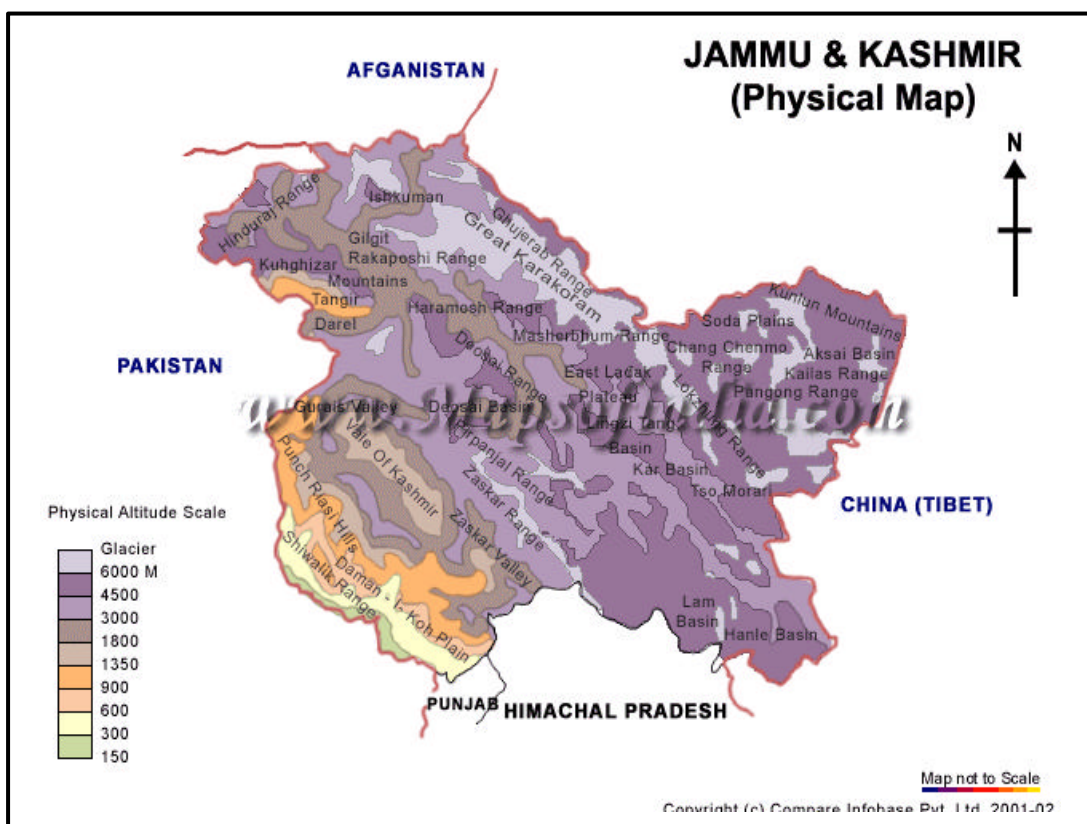
Valley of Kashmir: Between the Pir Panjal and the western end of the Great Himalayan ranges lies a deep asymmetrical basin called the Vale of Kashmir. Lawrence described it as:

*“If one looks at the map of the territories of His Highness the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir one sees a white foot-print set in a mass of black mountains. This is the valley of Kashmir, known to its inhabitants as Kashmir”.*⁶

⁶ Lawrence W.R.; “Valley of Kashmir”p.12.

The Upper Indus Valley: The valley of the upper Indus river follows the geological strike (structural trend) westwards from the Tibetan border to the point in the Pakistani sector where it rounds the great mountainous mass of Nanga Parbat to run southwards in deep gorges cut across the strike. In its upper reaches, gravel terraces flank the river; each tributary builds an alluvial fan out into the main valley. The town of Leh stands on such a fan, 11,483 feet (3500 meters) above sea level.

The Karakoram Range: The Karakoram region contains some of the world's highest peaks. As the altitude rises very much and majestic peaks appear; K₂ (Godwin Austin) the second highest peak in the world (28,264 feet or 8,615 metres) occupies the most important position.



Source: www.mapsofindia.com

Besides the complex mountain chain, innumerable rivers, springs and lakes also characterize the region. A brief geographical description follows:

RIVERS

The drainage of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is quite significant as is evident from the following distribution of drainage pattern.⁷

The *Jhelum* is the main waterway of the valley of Kashmir. It rises from a spring called Verinag from where a number of tributaries join the Jhelum and make it navigable from Khannabal to Wular Lake. Its total length in the valley is 177 km.

The *Ravi*, is the smallest of the rivers of the Punjab. The river leaves the Himalayas at Basoli and passes close to Kathua near Madhopur where it enters the plain of the Punjab.

The *Tawi* river, draining the outer hill region, flows around the city of Jammu after collecting drainage to the northeast of Jammu in the interior mountains.

The *Chenab* river rises in the Himalayan contour of Lahul and Spiti. Two streams, more or less parallel, the Chandra and the Bhaga, form the Chandrabhaga, or the Chenab. It drains the eastern section of the southern slope of Pir Panjal.

The *Indus* is another important river, which originates in Tibet near Kashmir border. A considerable portion of this river flows through our neighbouring nations.

LAKES

A number of lakes are found in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Most of them are of glacial origin. Some of the important lakes of the state are as follows:

The *Wular lake* in Kashmir is the largest freshwater lake in India. It is about 16 km long 9.6 kms wide with ill-defined shores. This lake lies between Bandipore and Sopore at a distance of 75 kms.

The *Dal Lake* is a beautiful lake near Srinagar. It is 8 km. long and 6.4 km. wide. It is the flood-lung of the Jhelum. The famous Mughal gardens are situated around it. Floating gardens found in this lake grow a large variety of vegetables.

The *Anchar Lake* is a swampy area. The Sind Nullah enters this lake from one side and flows out from the other. It is about 8 km. long and 3 km. wide. Gandarbal is a famous township on its northwest bank.

⁷ Raina, AN: "Geography of Jammu and Kashmir"

The *Mansbal Lake* is at a distance of 29 km from Srinagar and is situated at Sopore. It is 5 km. long and 1 km wide. It is connected with Jhelum by a canal near Sumbal.

The *Harwan Lake* is situated at a distance of 21 km. from Srinagar. It is 278 meters long, 137 meters wide and 18 meters deep. This lake is a source of water supply to Srinagar city.

The *Hokarsar Lake* lies on the Baramulla road about 13 km. from Srinagar. It is about 5 km. long and 1.5 km. wide. Willow trees are grown in abundance around its banks.

The *Konsarnag* or *Vishno Pad Lake* is situated in the Pir Panjal range at a height of 13124 feet (4000 meters) above sea level to the south of Shopian. It is about 5 km. long and 3 km. wide and is the source of the river Vishav. It is at a distance of 34 km from Shopian.

The *Gangabal Lake* is situated at a height of 11713 feet (3,570 meters) on the peak of Harmukh Mountain.

The *Sheshnag Lake* is situated near Vavjan, enroute to Shri Amarnath cave. It is at a distance of 28 km. from Pahalgam.

The *Neelang Lake* is situated in tehsil Budgam at a distance of 10 km from Nagam. It is bounded by dense forest.

There are two more lakes – *Tarsar* and *Marsar* that lie on the northern slope of the Harmukh mountain. Marsar Lake is the origin of the canal Sharab Kohl that provides water to the fountains that play in the Mughal Gardens. Marsar Lake flows into the Lidar, which is one of the largest tributaries of Jhelum.

Sokh and *Dokh* are two frozen lakes situated at Harmukh mountain. These are said to be two teardrops of Parvati – one a warm drop indicating happiness and another a cold one showing grief.

The *Pangong* is a salty lake in Ladakh. It is about 6.4 km long and 3.2 to 6.4 km wide at a height of 4,267 m above sea level. The other lakes of Ladakh are *Patlong*, *Thaled*, *Longzang*, *Pangor* and *Tsimoriri*.

SPRINGS

Kashmir Valley abounds in numerous springs of which Verinag (the source of Jhelum), Martand (Anantnag), Achhabal (Anantnag), Kokernag (Anantnag), Chashma

Shahi (famous for its fresh and digestive water situated near Srinagar on one side of the Boulevard road), Tullamulla or Khirbhawani (a sacred spring), Vicharanag, Sukhnag, Vishnosar and Harmukat Ganga in Srinagar area and Chirnagand Vasaknag in Anantnag are very famous.

FLORA AND FAUNA

Flora: Jammu and Kashmir abounds in rich flora (vegetation, forests). The state, described as 'paradise' on earth, is full of many hues of wood and game. The trees present in various enchanting colours through the cycle of the seasons among which the autumnal look is breathtaking. The most magnificent of the Kashmir trees is the *Chinar* found throughout the valley, which grows to gigantic size and girth. Walnut, willow, almond and cider also add to the rich flora of Kashmir. In Kashmir Valley, the well-marked vegetation is willow, which covers the marshy areas only.

Forests: Forests are mainly found where the annual rainfall is about 100 cm. However, scrubs forests are found where rainfall is less than 100 cm. The district wise forest area of 1999-2000 shows that 35640.50 km² of the state's area is under forest (Table I.2).

Table I.2
District wise Forest Area, 1999 - 2000

Districts	Area Under Forest (km ²)		
	Forest Area	Wild Life Area *	Total Forest Area
Anantnag	2068.00	546.75	2614.75
Pulwama	810.00	273.25	1083.25
Srinagar	380.00	311.00	691.00
Budgam	477.00	3.25	480.25
Baramulla	2690.00	384.75	3074.75
Kupwara	1703.00	-	1703.00
Leh @	29.00	13018.00	13047.00
Kargil @	7.00	112.00	119.00
Jammu	959.00	256.50	1215.50
Udhampur	2343.00	42.25	2385.25
Katua	991.00	44.75	1035.75
Doda	5555.00	418.00	5973.00
Rajouri	1267.00	-	1267.00
Poonch	951.00	-	951.00
TOTAL	20230.00	15410.50 (P)	35640.50

Source: Digest of Statistics 1999-2000, Government of Jammu and Kashmir, p.85.

Out of this, more than 99 per cent of the forest area is confined to the province of Jammu and Kashmir only, with the largest area of 5973 km² in the district of Doda and smallest area of 480.25 km² in the district of Budgam. The figures of Leh and Kargil have not been mentioned because it is an estimated figure.

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Agriculture: Jammu and Kashmir State is full of natural resources of great economic potential. The physiographic location imposes a number of constraints, particularly in agriculture and allied sectors. The initial land-use pattern in the state was purely agriculture. It has changed over a period of time to agri-horticultural-silvi-pastoral.⁸ Although the net area sown has remained more or less same - 7.31 lakh hectare in 1990-91 to 7.33 lakh hectare in 1999-2000, the area under fruit and vegetable cultivation has marginally increased over the same period of time. In respect of fruit, it has gone up from 176.30 thousand hectare in 1990-91 to 213.73 thousand hectare in 1998-99. Vegetables have shown a marginal increase, from 14,000 hectare in 1990-91 to 14,930 hectare in 1999-2000.⁹ Rice, the staple crop, is planted in May and harvested in late September. Maize is the second-most important crop. The best soil for maize is reclaimed swamp and enormous crops are raised from the black peaty land, which lies under the banks of river Jhelum. In the high villages occupied by the Gujjar grazers, very fine crops of maize are grown. Other important summer crops are millet, pulses (legumes such as peas, beans and lentils), cotton and tobacco. Wheat and barley are the chief spring crops. Foodgrains production has shown an increase from 13664 thousand quintals in 1990-91 to 15253 quintals in 1998-99.¹⁰ Many temperate fruits are also grown. Large orchards in the vale of Kashmir produce apples, pears, peaches, walnuts, almonds and cherries. In addition, it is the largest producer of saffron in the Indian subcontinent. Artificial floating gardens on the lakes are favourable for the cultivation of flowers and vegetables.

In Ladakh, there is only one cropping season-Kharif, which extends from March to October. Cultivation in Ladakh is restricted to near the main valleys of Indus, Shyok and Suru rivers, where barley, buckwheat, turnips and mustard are grown. Recently, strawberry cultivation has also been introduced in Ladakh. Pastoralism and cattle breeding have long been the vital features of the Ladakh economy. The Kashmir goat raised in the region provides pashmina for the production of fine fabrics.

8 Bio-physical and socio-economic set up in the Indian Upper Himalayas.

9 Indicators of Economic Development, Jammu & Kashmir-1999-2000, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Planning and Development Department, Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar.

Industries: The thick forests of Kashmir provide raw material for several industries. Important industries dependent on forests are:

- ❑ Poplar wood available in the Valley of Kashmir is mainly used by match industry. A large government match factory was established at Baramulla but it has not been functional for more than a decade.
- ❑ Wood of poplar and willow trees is used for making cricket bats and bringi wood is used for making hockey sticks.
- ❑ Walnut trees are grown in abundance in Kashmir. Walnut wood is suitable for woodcarving. The carved goods are exported to foreign countries also. Baramulla also manufactures walnut wood rifle-butts.
- ❑ At Pampore (Kashmir) and Bari Brahmana (Jammu) plywood, hardboard and chipboard manufacturing factories have been established. Pulp required for the manufacture of hand-made paper, strawboard and cardboard is also obtained from the forests.

Kashmiris have won a great reputation as artisans. The chief center of Kashmiri industries is of course Srinagar, but other localities are famous for their special crafts. Kulgam is famous for its lacquered woodwork and Bijbihara has a reputation for woodcarving. The basket industry is also important and most villages have artisans who make baskets for agricultural purposes. The lacquered work, which had a great reputation, is now declining. The other industries that have developed from the rural crafts include handloom weaving of local silk, cotton, carpet weaving and woodcarving. Such industries together with silver and copper work got impetus in the past by the presence of the royal court and later by the tourist trade; they also owe something to the important position achieved by Srinagar in the west Himalayan trade. Handicraft manufacture is also important in Ladakh, particularly production of pashmina shawls, carpets and blankets.

The state is rich in water resources, which can generate electricity on a large scale. The other natural resources include fruit, timber minerals and herbs which are found in abundance. As far as the social sectors are concerned, education is free for all. The state has two major institutes of higher education, namely, University of Kashmir and University of Jammu. As far as primary and secondary education is concerned, the number of primary and high/higher secondary schools has increased from 9242 and 1220 in 1990-91 to 10515 and 1466 in 1999-2000 respectively. The health sector, hospitals and dispensaries are scattered throughout

10 ibid

the state. Unani is popular in Srinagar, while Amchi is popular in Ladakh. Ladakh has an excellent network of health care delivery system throughout the district. Srinagar has a highly specialised institute of Medical Sciences, founded in 1982. A total of 6466 villages have been covered by safe drinking water by 1999-2000.¹¹

SOCIO-CULTURAL PROFILE

This land of snow-clad mountains, situated in the northernmost side of the Indian Union presents an interesting socio-cultural profile. It is famous for its extravagant natural beauty. This land formed a major caravan route in the ancient times. Trade relations through these routes between China and Central Asia made it a land inhabited by various religious and cultural groups. Kashyapa is said to have laid the foundation of Kashmir. It was during his reign that the various wandering groups led a settled life. Buddhism influenced Kashmir during the rule of Ashoka and the present town of 'Srinagar' was founded by him. The Mughals had a deep influence on this land and introduced various reforms in the revenue sector and other areas that added to the progress of Kashmir. They were also responsible for bringing this land on to the cultural map of the region. In 1820, Maharaja Gulab Singh got the *jagir* of Jammu from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He is said to have laid the foundation of the Dogra dynasty. In 1846 the Kashmir was sold to Maharaja Gulab Singh. Thus the two areas of Kashmir and Jammu were integrated into a single political unit. A few chieftains,¹² alien races, ethnic groups and various religions have influenced the cultural ethos and mode of life of the people of this region.

The mosaic of the ethnicity of Jammu and Kashmir is complex and the race structure cannot be explained without understanding the pre-historic movements of people. In the process of peopling of the region, the Dards in the northwest, the Ladakhis in the east, the Gujjars in the south and Paharis in the southeast have closely influenced the existing ethnicity of the people. The immigrants from territories of Turkmenia, Tazakistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Georgia, Azerbaijan (USSR) Turkey, Iraq and Afghanistan influenced the racial composition of the state.

In order to have deeper understanding of the socio-cultural milieu in general and the people of the state in particular, it will be useful to have a look at the major

11 Indicators of Economic Development, Jammu & Kashmir-1999-2000, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Planning and Development Department, J&K, Srinagar.

12 History-Jammu and Kashmir at www.webindia123.com/jammu/land/landintro.htm

ethnic groups that inhabit the state. One finds a very good account of these groups in the work *Geography of Jammu & Kashmir* by *Majid Hussain*.¹³ A summarized version of the same is expected to facilitate understanding the people of J&K state. According to him, 'the various ethnic groups of Jammu and Kashmir state though intermingled have their areas of high concentration. For example, Kashmiris are mainly concentrated in the bottom of the valley; Dards occupy the valley of Gurez, Hanjis are confined to water bodies of Kashmir; Gujjars and Bakarwals are living and oscillating in the Kandi areas; Dogras occupy the outskirts of the Punjab plain, while Chibhalis and Paharis live between Chenab and Jhelum rivers. Moreover, there are numerous small ethnic groups like Rhotas, Gaddis and Sikhs which have significant concentration in isolated pockets of the state.

Kashmiris: 'Kashmiri' is a wide term which has loosely been applied for several streams of immigrants mainly from Turkey, Iran, Central Asia and Afghanistan, and settled in the valley. There is close bearing of the Indo-Aryans on the racial composition of the Kashmiris. They are broad shouldered and usually of medium to tall stature. They are much dolichocephic, have a well-developed forehead, a long narrow face, regular features and a prominent straight and finely cut nose. In disposition they are talkative, cheerful and humorous. They make good craftsmen. The influence of Dards, Ladakhis and Punjabis has also moulded the ethos of Kashmiri culture. They are well spread in various parts of the state but their major concentration lies in the Valley, Kishtwar, Doda and Ramban tehsils of Jammu Division.

*Dogra*s: On the outskirt of the Siwaliks facing the plain of Punjab is the habitat of Dogras, a distinctive ethnic group of Jammu Division. They belong to the Aryan race and speak the Dogri language. In appearance, Dogras are short statured, slim and have high shoulders. They have a wheatish complexion, slightly hooked nose, brown eyes and jet black hair.

Dards: Dards have a long history. In the opinion of *Leitner*, Dards belong to the Aryan stock. This opinion is also endorsed by Ray who states that the Dardic Aryans parted from the main Aryan mass just after their entrance into India. Dardic Aryans then colonized the Pamir region from where they spread to Chitral and Gilgit. At present, their major concentration lies in Dardistan (Derdesa) the area to the north of Kashmir Valley, especially in the catchment of Kishanganga north of Sardi, Gurez and Tilel. In physical appearance, the Dards are broad shouldered, moderately stout and have well-proportioned bodies. They are dependent on agriculture, pastoralism, cottage industries and trade.

13 *Geography of Jammu & Kashmir* by Majid Hussain, Rajesh Publications, New Delhi-110002

Ladakhis: Ladakhis are a mixture of Mongoloid and Aryan races. The Aryans who settled originally in the subcontinent's northern parts were the early Buddhist people from Kashmir and the Dards from Gilgit. The Mongolian stock is traced to Tibet. The present-day population of Ladakh is the result of blending together of Dards and the Mongolians. Ladakhis are simple, good natured, cheerful, friendly, industrious and honest. They are seldom angry and make friends easily. In conversation they are very polite. They are well built and have developed sufficient resistance as they work even when the temperature is as low as -25 degrees centigrade.

Gujjars and Bakarwals: They constitute a significant proportion of the population of the state. In general, they are nomadic in character and largely depend on rearing livestock for their livelihood. The diffusion and spread of Gujjars in the state is not known with certainty. According to one account, the arrival of Gujjars in Jammu & Kashmir is attributed to the outbreak of devastating droughts and famines in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Kathiawad, which led to the out migration of these people (Gujjars), who along with their cattle entered the pastures of the Siwaliks and the sub-Himalayas. Their major concentration in the state lies in Jammu, Rajouri, Udhampur, Poonch, Uri, Ganderbal, Anantnag, Daksum and Kandi areas of Jammu and Kashmir Divisions. Although some of them have started settling, they are essentially cattle rearers and a section of them – Bakarwals regularly oscillates between the southern slopes of the Siwaliks and the Margs of the Central Himalayas. The houses of Gujjars and Bakarwals are locally known as *kothas* and *bandis*. It is generally a mud-house against the slope of a hillock. They are mostly followers of Islam except a few who have settled in Bimber, Mirpur and Rajouri. Gujjars are known for their hard work and gentle nature as well as for their traditional tribal songs and the simple tribal pattern that they weave into their clothes. They have subsistence type of economy and try to produce everything they need in their daily life.

Hanjis: Hanjis, the dwellers of water, constitute a significant ethnic group in the valley of Kashmir. They are mainly confined to the Dal, Wular and Anchar lakes and the Jhelum river, especially between Khanabal (Anantnag District) and Chattabal (Srinagar District). They belong to one of the ancient racial groups who were essentially Nishads (boatman). Some of the Hanjis claim to be the descendents of Prophet Noah. They are a sturdy, hard-working active people with great imagination. On the basis of occupation and social status, Hanjis are divisible into (i) Demb-Hanz (vegetable growers), (ii) Gari-Hanz (water-nuts gatherers), (iii) Gad-Hanz (fishermen), (iv) Mata-Hanz (who deal in woods), (v) Dunga-Hanz (owner of passenger boats), (vi) Haka-Hanz (collectors of wood from water bodies), (vii)

Bahatchi-Hanz (who live in Bahatch boats), (viii) Shikara-Hanz (who ply Shikara boats), and (ix) House-boat Hanz. Tourism is an important activity on which many of the Hanjis are dependent.

The constituent units of the state of Jammu and Kashmir still retain many of their distinctive religious, ethnic and linguistic features within the framework of unity. This unity contains heterogeneity and was not lost even when they were incorporated in one or the other empires, namely, Mauryan, Kushan, Mughal, Sikh or British. Today the state symbolises the ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious diversity of India.¹⁴

¹⁴ www.indianembassy.org/policy/kashmir_MEA/geography.html